

Is a pat on the rump worth \$4.2 million? (Between heterosexual men, that is)

The courts say "yes." But Libertarians are outraged by same-sex lawsuits.

WASHINGTON, DC — Basketball star Michael Jordan hasn't sued teammate Scotty Pippin for sexual harassment, but he might be able to under federal law.

That's because giving a male colleague a pat on the rump — something pro athletes do every game — has been ruled *illegal* by some federal courts, the Libertarian Party noted today.

"When it comes to writing sexual harassment laws, politicians simply can't control themselves," Dasbach said. "They've managed to turn rowdy locker-room behavior into a federal crime. And men offended by such behavior have pocketed multimillion-dollar payoffs under sexual harassment laws — even if both men are heterosexuals."

In fact, there has been a flurry of such lawsuits recently, and the Supreme Court agreed this month to hear a landmark case to decide, once and for all, whether heterosexual men can sue each other for sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment laws provide a case study of how legislation quickly becomes corrupted beyond its original purpose by politicians," Dasbach said. "Politicians who claim to be protecting people from harm have written laws that make a mockery of justice and create a bonanza for greedy lawyers."

As proof, here are some recent winners in the Heterosexual Harassment Sweepstakes:

■ An employee of J&J Snack Foods in Pennsauken, NJ, was awarded \$4.2 million after a male supervisor made sexual jokes and grabbed him from behind.

■ An auto mechanic in Richmond, VA, sued when his male co-workers displayed *Playboy* magazines in the men's room and listened to sexually explicit radio shows.

■ Three men at a Massachusetts lumber company won \$145,000 in February after a male boss bear-hugged them from behind and joked over a loudspeaker that one of them was gay.

"Politicians have created a country where every workplace incident has become a lawsuit waiting to happen and juvenile behavior has become a felony," Dasbach said. "It's time to return to common sense. It's time to let employers deal with boisterous behavior and horseplay as workplace disciplinary problems — not as Supreme Court cases."

"Finally, it's time for politicians to stop harassing businesses with silly laws. The hostile environment created by politicians is more offensive than a pat on the rump could ever be."

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